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ABSTRACT

This report describes the background and performed activities of the development project Early Childhood Care and Education, in Kenya, from 1988 to 1993. The main purpose of the project is to stimulate activities for the benefit and development of preschool children in Kenya. The project deals with aspects of nutrition, health care, health education, and educational stimulation for children 3-6 years old. The three main activities of the project are (1) research and development work; (2) training activities; and (3) sponsorship. The research and development work has been conducted through the "Two Villages Project," which stimulates activities and contributes to improvement of the environment in two rural villages. The training activities at the Kenyatta University Child Care Center have not yet been developed. In the area of sponsorship, money has been collected for a frequent milk supply and for a roof for a newly built preschool house in the project villages. The present political and economic situation in Kenya makes it difficult for the project to carry on with its plans. (AP)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION, KENYA

A progress report on a development project

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EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION, KENYA

A progress report on a development project

Bengt E. Svensson

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In 1988 the development project Early Childhood Care and Education was initiated at the Malmö School of Education.

The main purpose of the project has been to stimulate activities for the benefit and development of preschool children in Kenya.

Through collaboration between some different faculties at Lund University and Kenyatta University a model for capacity building has been developed.

The project activities include, among other things, visits of Swedish teacher students to Kenya, visits to Sweden by Kenian researchers and teachers and financial support to two small villages in Kenya.

Keywords: Capacity building, childhood care, development, education, Kenya.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION, KENYA

At the end of 1990 it was confirmed that the project Early Childhood Care and Education should get USD 25 000 as financial contribution from UNESCO Participation Programme (No. 6279). The money was transferred to the Department of Educational and Psychological Research, Malmö School of Education/Lund University. The project has got financial contribution from some other sources, too, among these the Swedish Institute and the Malmö School of Education.

This joint project is meant to be conducted in cooperation between some different departments at Lund University and Kenyatta University.

The contribution by UNESCO has been of great importance for the development of the different project activities.

BACKGROUND

Originally the project was initiated due to a visit to the Malmö School of Education by Dr. Yusuf Eraj, Nairobi, in 1988.

The main purpose of the project is to stimulate to activities for the benefit and development of children in Kenya in general in an attempt to try to develop a model for capacity building. It might also be part of the building up of an international knowledge-network. The project might be a model of how to mobilize a Nordic University with its different departments to link up with in the support of African institutional strengthening programmes.

Activities will be planned and carried out through cooperation between researchers and teacher trainers at Kenyatta University in Kenya and Lund University in Sweden. A formal link between the two universities will be established.

The project deals with aspects concerning nutrition, health care, health education and educational stimulation for children mainly in the age of 3-6 years old. The three main activities are as follows.

1 Research and development work

Within the research and development work activities have been planned as follows:

The "Two villages project"

This part of the project will be carried through in collaboration with Faculty of Education, Kenyatta University. (Ref.: Professor Henry O. Ayot and Professor Daniel Kiminyo).

The aim is to stimulate activities as well as to contribute to improvement of the environment in two villages in rural areas for the benefit and development of children. Aspects of health, sanitation, nutrition and educational stimulation will be taken into account.

2 Training activities

2.1 The Child Care Centre at Kenyatta University

Collaboration with Faculty of Home Economics at Kenyatta University and UNESCO, Paris (Nutrition and Health Education, Division of Science, Technical and Environmental Education) in connection with the development of a Child Care Centre which started its activities in 1991. (Ref.: Dr. Susanne van der Vynckt and Mrs Margarete Sachs, UNESCO). The Child Care Centre is situated at Kenyatta University.

2.2 Teacher training

Activities concerning preschool teacher training and research training are planned to take part through the involvement by trainers and researchers from Lund University/Malmö School of Education.

3 Sponsorship

Within the frame of sponsorship interest has been shown by teacher students at the Malmö School of Education, three local school districts in Malmö and some scout groups (NGO) in the region of Malmö-Lund.

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Representatives of the following departments at Lund University/Malmö School of Education have been involved in the project:

- Department of Educational and Psychological Research, Malmö School of Education
- Department of Preschool Teacher Training, Malmö School of Education
- Department of Nurse Teacher Training, Malmö School of Education
- Department of Cariology and Periodontology, School of Dentistry, Lund University
- Department of Applied Nutrition, Lund University

- Department of Water Resources Engineering and Applied Technology, Lund University
- Department of Economic and Cultural Geography, Lund University
- Department of Paediatrics (Habilitation), Malmö General Hospital

Preschool teacher trainers, nursing teacher trainers and researchers from the different departments mentioned above, together about 30 persons, have contributed with their knowledge and experience through participating in development work, seminars, training courses and field work in Kenya. A scout group (NGO) in the Malmö-Lund region is linked to the project.

Professor Horst Löfgren is the project leader and Dr. Bengt E. Svensson is the project coordinator, Department of Educational Research, Malmö School of Education/Lund University.

PERFORMED ACTIVITIES 1988-1993

After a period of planning and preparations (from autumn 1988) the implementation of the project activities was said to take place early in 1991. However, the start was postponed due to the Gulf War. The "new" start of the project could take place in June 1991. Below the different project activities – carried through and planned – are described in brief.

1988

October — Four members of the project team at the Malmö School of Education visited Kenya. Discussions with representatives of Kenyatta University (Professor Henry Ayot and Professor Kiminyo, among others) concerning the joint project Early Childhood Care and Education. Visits were paid to the UNICEF and UNESCO offices in Nairobi.

1989

April — Ms Margarete Sachs, UNESCO, paid a 3 days' visit to the Malmö School of Education.

Whole y. — A network was built up in Sweden and Kenya including contacts with SIDA, SAREC, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Swedish Institute. Requests for financial contribution from

these organizations were made. This also included contacts with representatives of the World Bank.

The Swedish project coordinator was able to meet with representatives of Kenyatta University when visiting Nairobi.

1990

February — Two members of the Swedish project team participated in a UNESCO seminar in Nairobi concerning the development of the Child Care Centre at Kenyatta University.

March — Professor H. Ayot and Professor D. Kiminyo, Kenyatta University, visited Malmö School of Education and Lund University (25 March - 8 April).

May — Dr. A. Sigot, Kenyatta University, paid a one week's visit to the Malmö School of Education.

June — A group of teacher students from Malmö visited the two project villages. The students brought some learning materials to the preschools in the villages.

July — A Swedish scout group, linked to the project, visited the two project villages in Kenya. The scout group handed over some school equipment and materials (exercise books, pens etc.) to the preschools in the villages.

1991

June — Two researchers and members of the project team from the School of Dentistry, Malmö, visited the two project villages for collecting data.

July — The Swedish scout group, linked to the project, paid a second visit to the two project villages. Data concerning population, living and water conditions in the villages were collected to be handed over to Swedish researchers.

November — Mrs Monica Muli, preschool teacher in one of the project villages, stayed for a two weeks study visit in Malmö. Different preschools were visited by M. Muli. She took part in training activities at the Department of Preschool Teacher Training, Malmö School of Education. She could bring back a range of school materials and equipment for her preschool back in Kenya.

1992

Sept.-December — Professor D. Kiminyo, Kenyatta University, was invited to spend part of his "sabbatical leave" in Sweden (Malmö and Lund) during three months, September-December. A scholarship was received from the Swedish Institute.

Professor Kiminyo made a study of early childhood education in Sweden.

An agreement between Kenyatta University and Lund University has been discussed for a long time. Drafts of this agreement have been sent to Kenya at different times. Still there is no agreement because of delays in Kenya.

It was planned a visit to Kenya by a researcher from the Water Resource Department at Lund University. Unfortunately the visit could not take place as planned because of certain reasons.

Preparations were made for the working out of some kind of health care material to be used by children, parent and teachers in the project villages. A pilot version of the planned material will be produced during the end of 1993.

1993 — Obviously there has been delays when trying to carry through different project activities which have been planned at earlier stages. Besides the Gulf war also the political and economic situation in Kenya during 1992 and 1993 has caused some of these delays.

WHAT HAS BEEN AVHIEVED?

1 Research and development work

Within the frames of collaboration between departments at the two universities common activities have been discussed at some meetings in Nairobi and Malmö/Lund with representatives of Kenyatta University and Lund University.

1.1 The "Two villages project"

Researchers, teacher trainers, teacher students and scout groups from Sweden have visited the villages in rural areas east and south-east of Nairobi. Data collecting has been made in the villages and school equipment and materials have been brought to the preschools in the two villages.

Educational material will due to plans be developed concerning dental care by Swedish researchers and teacher training in collaboration with the partners in Kenya. This educational material is meant to be used by teachers, children and parents in Kenya.

2 Training activities

2.1 Child Care Centre at Kenyatta University

This part of the project has not yet been developed. Invitation for one person from the Child Care Centre in Nairobi to come to Sweden in November 1991 was sent via UNESCO, Paris. Unfortunately no definite answers was received from UNESCO.

2.2 Teacher training

As mentioned above Mrs Monica Muli, Kenya, stayed in Sweden for two weeks. She took part in some of the training activities at the Department of Preschool Teacher Training in Malmö in November 1991. M. Muli plans to arrange workshops on preschool education in her region back in Kenya.

3 Sponsorship

Money has been collected by teacher students and the scout groups for the following purposes:

- frequent milk supply for the children in one of the project villages,
- getting a roof for a new built small house for preschool activities in the two project villages.

The director of the Malmö Schools has been willing to support the villages as well as the Child Care Centre with some school equipment and

materials. Because of the lack of money for the transportation of materials and equipment to Kenya, nothing has not yet been distributed.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN SUBSEQUENTLY?

The project will in some way or other go on in 1994. Some members of the project group are planning to visit Nairobi during 1994 with the purpose, among others, to try to evaluate the different project activities performed up till now. This evaluation will be carried through together with representatives of Kenyatta University.

Because of the present political and economic situation in Kenya, however, it now seems to be somewhat difficult to carry on with the project plan.

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